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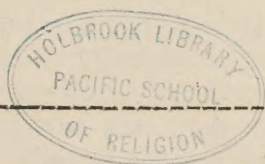
the WORLD COUNCIL of CHURCHES (in process of formation)  
the INTERNATIONAL MISSIONARY COUNCIL  
the WORLD ALLIANCE for INTERNATIONAL FRIENDSHIP THROUGH THE CHURCHES  
the WORLD ALLIANCE of YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATIONS  
the WORLD'S YOUNG WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION  
the WORLD'S STUDENT CHRISTIAN FEDERATION  
the WORLD'S SUNDAY SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

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## Unitas and the World Council of Churches

In the quarterly magazine "Unitas" (September 1947), organ of the (Roman Catholic) Unitas Association, the President of the Association, the Rev. Charles Boyer, S.J. analyses a recent article by Dr Visser 't Hooft, General Secretary of the World Council of Churches, on the nature of the World Council.

We quote the following passages - which indicate that "Unitas" far from having a new approach to the problem of unity, does not show as much sympathetic understanding for the genius of the World Council as has been shown by several other Roman Catholic movements and personalities.

With regard to the "dualism" of the World Council, Father Boyer says: "On the one hand these churches can only meet together by excluding any interference from any authority on the matter of doctrine, and by respecting the most sharp contrasts which exist between the groups concerned. On the other hand they would like to advance in the direction of unity and even to regard themselves as a real embodiment of unity - fugitive perhaps, but nevertheless genuine. But in religious matters, where there is no unity of faith, what unity can be maintained? And in the case of Stockholm and Lausanne, when the question of Christian unity comes up, how can we believe that this unity is a fact when there is scarcely any agreement about anything, and the great Church of Rome is absent and - it must be admitted - in disagreement? The hope which remains is that nevertheless these non-Catholic Christians are haunted by the ideal of real unity. They talk about the Una Sancta, about the one Body of the one Church of Christ, about the unity of the Early Church described in the New Testament. They call this unity invisible, but perhaps one day they will see that it must be visible; they see the Una Sancta as something in the future, but perhaps they will come to recognise that this Una Sancta did once exist in the past, that it exists today, that by accepting painful divisions, it has not abjured its faith, but has rather affirmed and consolidated it, and that it keeps all its doors wide open to await the return of those who left it during a troubled period of history."







On the question of the "authority" of the World Council which, according to Archbishop Temple's phrase "will consist in the weight which it carries with the Churches by its own wisdom", Father Boyer remarks:

"One might believe that through inspiration and prophetic insight unity might be achieved, at least partially. If the World Council of Churches is inspired to launch an appeal or proclaim a principle, are not all the churches going to follow it? Dr Visser 't Hooft does not desire this, nor could he really desire it. It would mean restoring the principle of authority. It would mean attributing to an organ - which was recognised as inspired - the privilege which Roman Catholics recognise in the Pope and the Councils, whom they know are assisted by the Holy Spirit. Whatever may be the message of the World Council of Churches, it remains open to free criticism from the different denominations, even to the criticism of many individual Christians. It is for each individual to decide whether the Council has really been inspired, whether it is the expression of the one Body of Christ, whether real unity has come about for a moment... Consequently is it not probable that each group, and each individual, will regard the decisions of the World Council in the light of his own beliefs, accepting what is in conformity with them and rejecting the rest? Again, unity will only be reached on very general points, which will not even be specifically Christian. It really would not have been worth while for the Word of God to descend to earth, if it were only to announce points like these."

E.P.S. Geneva

#### FRANCE

#### Ecumenical Meeting between Roman Catholics and Protestants

For several years a number of ecumenical groups have been meeting in France for theological conversations concerning possible ways of achieving unity. These groups included priests, pastors, and Roman Catholic and Protestant professors. One of these groups, perhaps the oldest and the most active, held its annual meeting from September 1st to 5th with the permission of the ecclesiastical authorities. The preceding meetings, which had been held sometimes in a Catholic house, sometimes in a Protestant one, devoted their attention to the problem of the Church, of Tradition, the Sacrament, the Eucharist, of natural Revelation, etc. This year the group dealt with the difficult question of the nature of the Church.

Profound agreement was reached on the question of the Bible and of the Church as the Body of Christ. Difficulties cropped up where the group tried to define the range of the Body of Christ and its relation to the Church as institution. The Protestants were unanimous in thinking that the Church - the Body of Christ, which in order to be truly the Church must always take concrete forms as an institution - may constitute itself in different forms and that all these, in various ways, may claim to make visible the Body of Christ. This divergence between institutions is abnormal and is due to human sin. But while waiting for the visible unity of the Church, we must recognise that God is revealing the life of Christ through many different concrete institutions. The Roman Catholics, - in accordance with the encyclic "Mystici Corporis" - admitted that the Church included people who were outside the strict boundaries of the institution, but for them the Mystic Body could only be legitimately revealed in one way: in the Roman Catholic Church.







The difficult problem of prophecy within the Church was also discussed. In order to safeguard the freedom of God, of His Revelation and of Scripture, and in order to avoid the Church becoming introverted and engrossed solely with its own internal life, the Protestants admitted in exceptional cases the possibility of a prophetic reaction. This might lead to a schism, and prove salutary for the Church. The Catholics, however, only saw the possibility of prophecy within the institution, - a prophecy which accepts suffering and allows itself to be broken, so as not to destroy the unity of the whole, believing that God is always guiding His Church, whatever its decisions may be, and that if the prophet's message comes from God it will bear fruit even in obedience and submission.

Finally they discussed the question of the apostolic succession. This was not to be regarded as the transmission of a sort of "magic" power which was needed in order to make the Sacraments valid, but rather as the visible manifestation of the unity of the Church in time and space, the sign of the community of believers. Furthermore the apostolic succession was presented as a manifestation of the divine transcendence in the choice of ministers who are not dependent upon the present wishes of any given community, but upon a will which should be sought in the origin of the Church. The Protestants said that in their theology there was an idea of apostolic succession with the same sense of community, manifesting the essential unity and continuity of the Church. This succession is found in the fact that the Word of God is always faithfully transmitted in the Scriptures and its presence assured in the two Sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion, irrespective of the weaknesses of the Church as an institution.

The meeting took place in a spirit of fervent prayer. The purpose of these meetings is not to arrive at premature agreements, which would be worked out on a basis of confusion. Every member thinks it essential to remain true to his own tradition and to deepen it in a spirit which grows more and more obedient to Scripture and to the demand for unity with which God confronts His Church today. Prayer is essential. Unity will only be brought about through prayer.

E.P.S. Geneva

## GREECE

### The Orthodox and the Ecumenical Situation

Professor P. Bratsiotis of Athens, member of one of the preparatory Commissions for the coming Assembly of the World Council at Amsterdam, has published an article in "Ekklesia" (No. 33/34) in which he discusses the World Council of Churches and its future. After describing the history of the ecumenical movement, Professor Bratsiotis appeals to the Orthodox Churches to send strong delegations to the first Assembly of the World Council, "so that Orthodoxy may appear in its imposing unity and that national and political tendencies may be overcome". The author formulates the following desires concerning the future of the Council:

"It is desirable that the Churches should not depart from their common dogmatic basis in their alliance and cooperation, i.e. from faith in Jesus Christ as God and Saviour of the world. 'For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ' (I.Cor.3:11). This faith must





illumine all the public meetings which are being prepared and all the written and oral discussions preparatory to the Conference. Any tendency to rationalism must be excluded. It is also to be desired, or rather it is absolutely essential, that in future (or at least for a number of years) the efforts and ambitions of the leaders of the ecumenical movement should be confined mainly to cooperation between the Churches, mainly in problems of so-called Life and Work. Discussion of dogma must be put on one side or restricted to the Churches or Christian associations. The tremendous idea, which is so beautiful to every real Christian, of the dogmatic unity of the Christian worlds, is prepared and greatly promoted by cooperation in practical tasks. But with the help of human egoism, both collective and individual, the gulf between the Churches is widened by such discussions, and the already-existing differences become sharper and more conscious..."

In closing, Professor Bratsiotis makes an appeal to the Roman Catholic Church to participate in the Council: "Although it sounds rather strange, may I be permitted - with the freedom both of a Christian theologian and of an admirer of the organisation, efficiency, dignity and force of this Church - to urge its leaders to cooperate actively with other Christians in the sphere of practical work within the fellowship of the Churches..."

"The attitude shown hitherto will certainly prove detrimental both to this Church and to humanity. It is easy, especially in times of peace, to claim that the Churches who separated from her should return to her fold. But as the Roman Catholic Church knows how difficult it is to make this claim effective, it is taking on an enormous responsibility to God and humanity and incurring the danger of being regarded as incurably selfish, if it goes on making such unacceptable imperialistic claims. By doing so, the Church renders futile the work for understanding and cooperating in the Christian world, at the moment when the structure of Christendom is already shaken to its foundations (although we firmly believe that 'the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it') and humanity stands on the edge of the abyss..."

"Because we know the history of this Church, and the self-denial of its leaders and the excellent gifts of its present head, and because we are moved by the ideal of Christian unity, we hope the blessed day is not far distant when this Church will be ready to take part in the common effort for cooperation between the Churches to the honour of Christ and the victory of God's Kingdom. A gesture of this kind would doubtless be the most important step in the direction of the unity of the Churches, which we so ardently desire..."

E.P.S. Geneva

#### UNITED STATES

#### National Stewardship Conference

At the National Stewardship Conference in Washington D.C. which took place on November 16, 1947 and embraced Roman Catholics, Protestants and Jews a message of President Truman was given to the gathering. Stressing the aims of the National Stewardship Conference, President Truman said among other things:

"Our national income which was seventy billion dollars in 1920, and dropped to forty-two billion in 1932, has risen until it has reached unprecedented-







ed heights. It was one hundred seventy-eight billion in 1946, more than four times the total income in the depths of the depression in 1932. But the percentage of givings to all Church and charity institutions dependent upon voluntary support for their maintenance, which I am informed was 5,3% in 1932, is currently reported to be 1,6% during this time of our highest prosperity.

"I submit to my fellow citizens that we cannot hope to be worthy of the continued blessing of Providence if our prosperity is used selfishly for our own personal gratification without a more appropriate increase in the voluntary, systematic support of those religious, educational and character building agencies and institutions upon which the integrity of the Nation is based...

"If the forty million wage earners, together with those who pay their taxes in other ways, would voluntarily adapt such a provision to the practice of laying aside on each payday for privately supported religious, educational and character building agencies a share of their income, the problems which are confronting you in the National Stewardship Conference would be quickly solved."

E.P.S. Geneva

#### JAPAN

#### Missionary Work

In October the Joint Deputation of nine from the Japan Committee of the Foreign Missions Conference of North America returned to the United States and gave a full report on their visit to Japan during the month of August.

The members of the deputation covered the entire country in small teams. Some 490 conferences gathered in these sectional meetings during the first part of the month. The climax was reached in a nation-wide conference at Yumoto Hot Springs, where about 120 leading nationals met with missionary delegates and the deputation from North America. Discussion was centred on questions dealing with church matters and on the consideration of the educational and social outreach of the Protestant community.

The Yumoto Conference was the first meeting of its kind since the close of hostilities; it was free from the fear of the supervision of former days and was marked by deep fellowship. Some lines of advance were cooperatively thought through. A whole day was taken up with consideration of the proposed Council of Cooperation, which will correspond to the Interboard Committee in New York. It will promote closer affiliation between erstwhile denominational groups in Japan, and will work out ways and means of pooling resources and personnel in a united approach.

With the help of Church World Service, the Yokohama office of the proposed Shipping-Purchasing Agency has begun to function; this is to serve the entire missionary constituency in matters of importation of foodstuffs and reconstruction supplies of all kinds.

In the face of mounting shortages and rising inflation, at the specific request of the Japan Committee, Church World Service is preparing to dispatch to Japan quantities of food, clothing and medicines which are specifically asked for full-time workers in Churches and Christian schools irrespective of deno-



ed hospital. It was one hundred seventy-eight billion in 1940, more than four times the total income in the depths of the depression in 1932. But the percentage of savings to all church and charity institutions dependent upon voluntary support for their maintenance, which I am informed was 5.3% in 1932, is currently reported to be 1.6% during this time of our highest prosperity.

"I submit to my fellow citizens that we cannot hope to be worthy of the continued blessing of Providence if our prosperity is used selfishly for our own personal gratification without a more widespread interest in the voluntary support of those religious, educational, and character building agencies and institutions upon which the integrity of the Nation is based...

"If the forty million wage earners, together with those who pay their taxes in other ways, would voluntarily adopt such a resolution for the practice of laying aside on each payday for private and religious, educational, and character building agencies a share of their income, the problems which are confronting you in the National Security Conference would be quickly solved."

Washington, D.C.

WASH.

In October, 1947, the National Security Conference was held in Washington, D.C. The President's Commission on the National Security Conference was held in Washington, D.C. and gave a full report on their visit during the month of August.

The members of the delegation covered the entire country in small teams. Some 400 conferences were held in those scattered meetings during the first part of the month. The class was held in a nation-wide conference at the Hotel Statler, where about 150 leading national and world leaders, delegates and the delegation from North America. Discussion was centered on problems dealing with church matters and on the consideration of the education of the Protestant community.

The National Conference was the first meeting of its kind since the close of hostilities; it was held from the 1st to the 10th of August. The days and was marked by busy fellowship. Four lines of activity were cooperative in thought throughout. A whole day was taken up with consideration of the proposed Council of Cooperation, which will correspond to the National Council in New York. It will provide closer relations between churches and denominations. It will provide for the exchange of goods and services of goods and services and personnel in a united approach.

With the help of Church World Service, the National Office of the proposed Shipping-Purchasing Agency has begun its function. This is to serve the entire missionary community in matters of transportation of goods and reconstruction supplies of all kinds.

In the face of mounting shortages and rising inflation, at the specific request of the National Council of Churches, the National Council of Churches has issued a call for full-time workers in churches and Christian schools irrespective of denomination.



minations. This effort is in addition to the continuous gifts by Church World Service through LARA (Licensed Agencies for Relief in Asia) and the Welfare Ministry of the Central Government.

Professor Tsuraki Yano - with experience in Government Higher School service, and more recently the head of Meiji Gakuin College in Tokio (Presbyterian-Reformed) - has accepted the executive secretaryship of the National Christian Education Association of Japan. E.P.S. Geneva

## SPAIN

### Increased Hostility towards Protestantism

Apart from what has already appeared in the press concerning the hostility towards Protestants in Spain, we are informed that at Barcelona the Methodist church - which belongs to an English mission - has been completely ransacked by about thirty Phalangists. On the evening of October 11, they entered the church and savagely destroyed the furniture, the pulpit, the organ, benches, doors, windows, harmonium, Bibles and hymn-books. The big Bible on the pulpit was torn up and the fragments scattered on the floor.

At Granollers, in Catalonia, a gang of Phalangists broke into the Church during the service. They forced the minister to come down from the pulpit and inflicted blows on him and upon the congregation. The police were informed and arrested the Phalangists... for a few hours for their unjustifiable behaviour.

From Villafranca comes grave news. Hostility to the Protestants is expressed in a general way by breaking the windows of churches during the services. E.P.S. Geneva

### Short News

Two new Missions Consuls in Indonesia.- The Netherlands Missionary Council decided in its meeting of November 12, to enlarge the staff of the central missionary coordinating agency in Indonesia: Two more Missions Consuls were appointed making a total of four. One of them, Dr. F.L. Bakker, is a member of the "Gereformeerde Kerken". Mr. de Niet will act in Batavia as coordinating president of the college of Missions Consuls, Dr. H.U. van Beyma will act as Missions Consul for Eastern Indonesia with headquarters in Macassar. EPS.Geneva

Public Relations at World Council.- Dr Frederick E. Reissig, Executive Secretary of the Federation of Churches in Washington, will join the staff of the World Council of Churches in Geneva on January 1st, 1948. His responsibility covers the public relations work in view of the coming Assembly of the World Council. His appointment covers the period until after the Assembly. EPS. Geneva

Nobel Prize for Peace to Friends Service Committee.- The Nobel Prize for Peace has been awarded to the Friends Service Committee, both in the United States and in England. EPS. Geneva

Pastor Hermann Maas Honoured.- Pastor Hermann Maas, of the Lutheran Church of Germany, Dean of the ecclesiastical district of Heidelberg, one of the pioneers







of the ecumenical movement and member of the World Alliance for International Friendship through the Churches has been awarded the title of doctor honoris causa of the University of Heidelberg.

EPS. Geneva

Dr James Kelly in Rome.- Dr James Kelly, General Secretary of the World Council of Christian Education (formerly World's Sunday School Association) while in Rome met with the leaders of the Protestant Churches and the Italian Council of Religious Education. They discussed the need for literature for which substantial grants were offered.

EPS. Geneva

Towards the Merger of American Christian Youth Movements.- The United Christian Youth Movement approved the basic principle of a proposed merger with the International Society of Christian Endeavour. Both groups anticipate it will take another year to complete the merger.

EPS. Geneva

## AUSTRIA

### Message of the Evangelical Synod

The General Synods of the Evangelical Church of the Augsburg and Helvetic Confession in Austria, which met on October 21 to 24, in Vienna after sixteen years' compulsory interruption, sent a message on the Reformation Festival of 1947 to all the Churches, including their pastors, elders and members. This message consists of three parts from which we quote the following:

"I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me'. We believe and confess that the Church has only one Lord to Whom we belong, and Whom we have to trust and obey in life and in death. This is the basis of all preaching and of all church action. His truth will destroy the self-righteous, will guide the seekers home, and comfort the sad.

"His truth was and is obscured when we seek salvation in human thoughts, ideals and personalities, listen to strange voices and serve other masters. We therefore request and admonish all the Churches and their ministers, 'fix your hopes on the mercy offered to us through the revelation of Jesus Christ', so that we may better witness His truth and more courageously confess His Gospel against the anti-Christian spirit of injustice, violence, cruelty, oppression and lack of discipline which is still so predominant in the world. Do not be cast down by distress and anxiety. Do not let bitterness and despair gain the mastery over you, for Christ is Lord. It is in this certainty that we pray to Him: 'Thy Kingdom come'."

The 2nd part is entitled: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations" and reminds of the grace of God. The third part of the message is: "A new commandment give I unto you; that ye love one another".

"We give thanks to God, recognising that we are privileged to share in this service of brotherly love to the poor, the ill, the suffering and anxious. But this love is betrayed if we only love people of our own kind, or allow greed and selfishness to control what we do. We therefore urge the Churches to prove themselves true disciples of the Lord Who came 'not to be ministered unto, but to minister'."

E.P.S. Geneva





UNITED STATESRussian Orthodox and the Moscow Patriarchate

The negotiations between the Russian Orthodox Church in America, headed by Metropolitan Theophilus on the one hand and Metropolitan Gregory representative of the Patriarch of Moscow on the other hand, concerning the problem of uniting the Russian Church in America with the Patriarchate in the U.S.S.R. (see E.P.S. 7, and 45 of 1946) have not met with success.

In the Cleveland Resolution of November 1946 (see EPS No. 45, 1946) the Russian Orthodox Church in America had expressed its willingness - by recognising Patriarch Alexis as its spiritual head and at the same time preserving complete autonomy - to place itself under the jurisdiction of the Church in Russia, from which it has been separated since the Revolution. Patriarch Alexis examined this suggestions and in July this year sent Metropolitan Gregory to New York to undertake negotiations, who is however now on his way back to Russia without anything having been accomplished.

The negotiations broke down owing to the contradictory interpretation of the conception of "autonomy" on both sides. The representatives of Metropolitan Theophilus, who had himself stayed away from the negotiations, insisted that the autonomy of their Church included the right to hold a sobor (Church Council) in the U.S.A., without having to ask permission from the Patriarch. Metropolitan Gregory rejected this request on the grounds that it overstepped the rights of an autonomous (i.e. self-governing) Church, because the convening of the Councils was the privilege of an "autocephalous" Church. His counter-proposal was to grant an autonomy which permits the Church of Metropolitan Theophilus to appoint its own bishops, whose appointment would then have to be confirmed by the Patriarch. In this way the Patriarch, as the highest authority in questions of church administration, would receive the recognition due to him. The representatives of Metropolitan Theophilus, however, insisted in their demand that the appointment of bishops should be independent of the Patriarch, and also that the Episcopal Council should be regarded as the highest ecclesiastical legal authority. This demand was rejected by Metropolitan Gregory as being contrary to the canonical laws of the Russian Orthodox Church.

At this point the negotiations broke off - temporarily, because the final decision concerning the Orthodox Church in America is to be taken by the next Church Council which meets every three years, i.e. not until 1949.

E.P.S. Geneva

GERMANYThe Y.M.C.A. in Germany and E.K.D.

The first conference of representatives of the Y.M.C.A. in Germany met at Willingen/Waldeck from September 3-8. A resolution was passed to send the following "Message to the Heads of the E.K.D." (Evangelical Church in Germany).

"The representatives of the Y.M.C.A. in Geneva see the enormous tasks which face young Christian people today, arising out of their service to the Gospel.





"We know that we are called to do service among young men in the Church - a task in which we have been guided by God for more than a century. Where the Church realises that service among young men is its most difficult task it will recognise the work of the Y.M.C.A. as a definite help.

At the present time we recognise that we have a special task among returned soldiers, following upon the world-wide service of the Y.M.C.A. in prisoners' camps. The special nature of our task ought to facilitate cooperation with the Church, not impede it.

We see with some anxiety that the new constitutions in Evangelical Churches restrict or exclude the work of so-called 'lay-people', instead of encouraging it in these dark times. Here and there we see with uneasiness an un-Christian tendency to recognise as 'church work' only the work undertaken under the direct leadership of the church authorities, a tendency to exercise authority in the same way as the rulers of this world. We ask the Church to preach a message which does not confine itself to theological formulae, but which really touches the young people of our country today.

We pray God to endow the heads of the Church with wisdom, that He may bless all their thoughts and plans, and that the Church and the Y.M.C.A. may both help in building the Kingdom of God."

E.P.S. Geneva

#### POLAND

#### Government Gives Legal Status to non-Roman Churches

A new Government decree signed by President Boleslaw Bierut and published in the official Gazette, gives full legal status and recognition to three non-Catholic church groups, which had either been discriminated against or had occupied a minor status under former Polish regimes. They are: the Evangelical Reformed Church, the Mariavite Church and the Old Catholic Church.

The Mariavite Church, which was established by dissent Roman Catholic priests and nuns at the beginning of the present century, was for many years forbidden to carry on any activity outside Plock and a few other towns.

Last year a union was announced between the Mariavites and the Old Catholic Churches, the Churches agreeing to pool their resources under a common church government, but each maintaining its own international organisation and doctrinal teaching.

E.P.S. Geneva





WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES  
17, route de Malagnou  
G E N E V A  
Switzerland

20th November, 1947.

To the Editors of the Religious Journals which receive the  
Ecumenical Press Service.

My dear Sirs,

You will be aware that at the present time we are preparing for the Assembly of the churches which is to be held in Amsterdam, Holland, from August 22nd to September 4th, 1948. At that Assembly, besides considering the moral condition of the world in our time, we anticipate that the World Council of Churches will be established and become a recognised servant of all the churches.

I am writing to ask for your assistance in two very vital matters. We would ask that you give such space as you can in your columns during the next few months to matters concerning this forthcoming Assembly. We are very much aware of the need for seeing that the Christian people of the churches throughout the world may have a sense of the vital character of this Assembly and of the significance that it might have in the movement for new vitality and unity which we all long to see in the Church.

We would also ask you to let us have in this office in Geneva one copy of any article in the columns of your papers which has bearing upon the Assembly. This is important, not merely for the sake of the records which we are keeping, but also because it will help us to learn the extent to which church people are having the Assembly brought before them, and it will suggest to us the needs which we should supplement by our own efforts.

I should be most grateful for your assistance in these two directions, and remain, with all good wishes,

Yours sincerely,

HERBERT W. NEWELL (Rev.)

Assistant General Secretary.

